

FAMILY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL

PhD Dijana Hristovska

hristdiki@yahoo.com

(PSStiv Naumov, Bitola, R.Macedonia)

PhD Snezana Jovanova-Mitkovska

snezana.jovanova@ugd.edu.mk

(Faculty of educational sciences, UGD Stip, R.Macedonia)

ABSTRACT

One of the essential characteristics of quality school is the family involvement in the life and work of the school. The main reason for the active promotion (affirmation) of family-school participation is scientific knowledge that it is useful and positive influence on student learning and development. The students learn more, progress, develop and achieve better results.

Right From there we set these issues: whether the family-school participation is a reality in our schools? How much the current models of support are focused on the humanistic side of education? How capable are the schools to respond to the legitimate interests of the parents? Who are objective obstacles to participation?

The aim of this labor is to emphasize the pedagogical function of family-school participation and the needs of developing models of such support. The family, as the child's natural environment is necessary to provide good conditions for development of the child and the school as a modern, coherent, micro organization is necessary to ensure continued, effective participation in which will be capable to communicate with the family with free manner free from protectionism, revenge, power individuals, political pressure. Parents will be involved in professional organs and will participate in making important decisions that will be of interest for the students and school. Parental participation implies their involvement in improving the school, the school curriculum, projects, workshops, classrooms, information on the present changes, problems, situations, success and development of students ...

Keywords: school quality, improving the work of the school, family-school participation, and models of service-participation.

INTRODUCTION

The question of the basic function of school quality arises and is founded in a new philosophy of living and working, where from the young people is demanding greater flexibility, creativity, originality, ambition, democracy, interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, stamina and a willingness to live and work in democracy and multicultural society.

If we want students to prepare for the challenges of the new time, the school must experience substantial change. The classroom should be a place where the students will be allowed to respect and support individual development according to their predispositions, adult characteristics, social and emotional family status, language level, style of home, parents'

academic education and in accordance with contemporary psychological theories of structural learning.

The school as a modern, coherent organization must be an attractive place in which will be respected, nurtured, kept inherited traditions, cultural traits, individual differences. There will be promoted multinational, social, intellectual, personal values and abilities of students in a working, democratic, disciplined fair environment built on interpersonal communication with all entities that directly or indirectly are included in the teaching process. Basic and common responsibility and duty of all parties involved in the educational process, depending on their role is to participate with respect and be persistent to affect the quality of realization and concretization of the educational objectives and trends in education goal. The new trends in the education impose the need for change of the traditional role of the family and putting in a pedagogical function to improve the school.

INCLUSION OF PARENTS IN SCHOOL

The need to improve the work of the school and seeing the possibilities and influence that offers this kind of participation inevitably imposes the need for openness to the outside of the school environment, family and community.

The continuing educational cooperation with the wider social environment can positively influence in overcoming of:

- Professional isolation of the teaching profession
- Individuality, non co-operability and alienation of the schools,
- Raising the educational and cultural level in the environment
- Successful achievement of educational goals
- Getting the school closer to the local environment
- Feedback on the results, the present conditions and difficulties at school
- Use of professional, material, cultural and financial resources from the immediate environment
- Improve and enhance the local environment

The impact of many reforms has led to overcome the traditional conception of the school and acceptance of new and modern concept with particular emphasis on parental participation.

Collaboration is a complex process that positively impact the learning and development of the students, and that requires expertise, planning and perseverance. In this sense the school curriculum should focus on the family as primary, important, natural environment of the student and to encourage the family to involve active in the life of the school and to show interest for their children.

Innovated structure of the curriculum for primary education promotes the principle of cooperation among students, teachers and parents which emphasizes that parents have the right to systematically receive information about the problems and the conditions of the school where their children are involved, and to participate in the school structure and the realization of certain activities.

MODELS OF INCLUSION OF PARENTS IN SCHOOL

The following models of involvement in our school practice have been identified:

- Communication
- Activities of the parents in school
- Pedagogical-psychological education of parents
- Voluntary involvement
- Parents as volunteers
- Parents as consulter
- Parents as helpers

1. Communication

This model of cooperation often has the characteristics of formal and informal communication for success, development, behavior and attendance of students. Usually it is accomplished through the following forms of cooperation:

- Parental meetings
- Individual interviews
- Group meetings
- Communication with teachers, director, pedagogue, psychologist
- Written communication
- Reports
- Parents' corner
- Visiting homes
- School events, performances, patrons and fairs organized by the school ceremony
- Handbook for parents
- Media center, library
- Internet
- E-mail
- Web portal

2. Activities of the parents

- Involvement in the school parents' council
- Work in the management body of the school
- Activities of the parents in the classroom
- Involvement in development projects, programs and seminars

3. Pedagogical and psychological education of the parents

- Service - information services (mental-sanitary, advisory and management services)
- Education for parents (acquisition of basic knowledge for upbringing and education of their children)
- Debates, presentations, audio-visual information and the Children's Parliament

4. Voluntary involvement

- Professional support
- Social support

- Parental support

5. Parents as volunteers

- In the classroom
- Projects
- School events and fairs
- Outdoor picnics, excursions

6. Parents as consultants

- Professional knowledge / skills in certain areas such as medicine, architecture, informatics, language etc.
- Expertise in a particular area
- Lectures, presentations and using of ICT
- Counseling parents have some knowledge and skills that can be used in the curriculum

EDUCATIONAL REALITY

In order to find out about the opinions and attitudes of teachers on whether the family-school participation is a reality in our schools, how much are the current support models focused on the humanistic side of education, how capable are the schools to meet the legitimate parent's demands and which are the real obstacles for raising the family-school participation practice, the non-structural interview technique was used. Conversations with the parents were held during the academic year 2010/11. Most of them were unconventional talks, free in form of an open conversation/discussion. During the conversation an unconventional protocol was used for which the participants were previously informed. The protocol was consisted of columns containing more informal and flexible threads.

The basic structure of the sample was participants recruited from the student's parents from elementary schools in the municipality. Meeting the will of the sample subjects, we give you their initials only, followed by part of their opinions and attitudes.

N.H. – "I think the current models of collaboration (communication, donations, consulting) are not a new component in our schools. I have the time and interest as well as my parents had interest to collaborate with the school when I was a student. What are the real obstacles? Well, I think that there is a serious need to consider the subjective selection of the school authorities, lack of feedback on the school work such as the school curriculum, organization of excursions, picnics, the financial resources of the school and so on."

S.V. – "We need more detailed, planned and organized cooperation. We need to share the experience of the process of learning. Unfortunately, even nowadays, the most typical form of cooperation has always been the parental meetings, where in front of an audience; publicly we speak about the students' achievements. The students are being criticized but that's a completed process. We need to figure out how to learn. How to achieve a better success? That is not the reality in our school. The existing models of cooperation are traditional, inefficient and formal.

The school door is closed very often for us. I would say that the internet, parents' handbook or an advising service would be some possible contemporary models..."

Parents think that the existing models of cooperation are not efficient enough in our school practice. We need progressive, well-planned patterns that are coherent with the school curriculum. They would consider: electronic grade book, online communication, pedagogical and psychological services, volunteering, consulting, advisory services etc.

K.M. – "I can say that the choice and involving the parents in the process of making important decisions at the school is an important component, but unfortunately, the reality in our schools is a reality of paradox. The protectionism, the political pressure and the power of individuals are present even in our schools. Only with good-willed involvement of the family, the educational community free of prejudices will allow gaining confidence and motivation for real improvement of the school, and to achieve real results in teaching our children.

A.G. – "What do I think about how our school is able to respond to our interests? Partly I guess, because mostly the collaboration is stereotyped. We, the parents, need to be encouraged to cooperate continuously, our knowledge, skills and capabilities to be used in educational purpose. That way we can all take part in improving the school and improve the learning process.

CONCLUSION

The involvement of parents in the school life and work is not a new component in the schools' activity in our country. Parents have always had the desire, time, interest in working with our schools. In traditional schools the collaboration with parents is dealing with:

- Skepticism and cynicism
- Forms of cooperation are incidental and stereotyped
- Parents are often not familiar with the activities of the school, the school curriculum, the working conditions, material equipment of the school, regulations and norms
- Insufficiently informed about the changes in school
- Selective involvement of parents in school bodies
- Quality school is focused on open interpersonal family-school participation based on mutual respect and trust that provides an opportunity to foster and develop a sense of responsibility and creating a mature creative social and emotional climate focused on improving the school.

Family-school participation is aimed at:

- Positive impact on the learning and children's development
- Progressive and innovative forms of cooperation
- Parents receive feedback about the school
- Consideration of the possibilities of improving the educational process
- Involvement of parents according to their interests, capabilities, expertise and desire
- The family environment as the student's basic environment is required to provide good conditions for intellectual, social, emotional and personal development of the child. On

the other hand the school as the sole intermediary with the family is necessary to provide effective long- term participation.

Literature:

1. Адамческа, С. (1996). Активна настава, Скопје: ЛЕГИС
2. Brekikj, J. (1994). Innovative Management, Line
- 3.. Basic education, content and organization of educational activities, Skopje, 1997.
5. Stoll L, Shanging our schools, Open University press Buckingham, 1996, Philadelphia
6. Delmo-Della-Dora-Parents and other citizens in curriculum development, Partners: Parents and Schools, ASCD, Publications, autumn, 1979